

Message Text

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46

ACTION HEW-06

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FM AMEMBASSY TUNIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4172

INFO AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

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DEPT PASS DHEW/RSA FOR MC CAVITT

NEW DELHI FOR DENO REED

E.O.11652: N/A

TAGS: OSCI TS

SUBJ: SFCP/DHEW/RSA: PROJECT 19-P-58369 PROSTHETICS/
ORTHOTICS

REF: STATE 222334; TUNIS 5761.

1. DENO REED DHEW/RSA AND EMBOFF CALLED ON DR. MOHAMED KASSAB, PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR OF SUBJECT PROJECT AND MADAME SOUAD CHATER, DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL REHABILITATION, MINISTRY OF SOCIAL AFFAIRS, TO DISCUSS STATUS AND FUTURE OF PROJECT. KASSAB STATED THAT ADMINISTRATIVE SET-UP OF PROJECT GAVE HIM NO CONTROL OVER USE OF FUNDS FOR WHICH HE FELT ACCOUNTABLE TO USG/DHEW, THUS PROMPTING HIS RESIGNATION FROM PROJECT. HE NEVERTHELESS PREPARED TO CONTINUE WITH PROJECT IF SUITABLE ADMINISTRATIVE ARRANGEMENTS CAN BE MADE.

2. BASIC PROBLEM SEEMS TO ARISE FROM SPLIT RESPONSIBILITY FOR PROJECT ACTIVITIES BETWEEN MIN SOCIAL AFFAIRS AND MIN PUBLIC HEALTH. DR. KASSAB, AS DIRECTOR OF ORTHOPAEDIC HOSPITAL, BELONGS TO MIN PUBLIC HEALTH, WHEREAS COLLABORATING INSTITUTION "THE BRACE SHOP" (CENTRE D'APPAREILLAGE) FALLS UNDER MIN SOCIAL AFFAIRS.

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3. IN MEETING WITH MADAME CHATER, ALSO ATTENDED BY

MR. MSSELLATI, ADMINISTRATOR OF THE BRACE
SHOP, IT WAS AGREED THAT: 1) MSSELLATI WOULD PROVIDE
FINANCIAL AND PROGRESS REPORTS TO EMBASSY ASAP; 2) CHATER
WOULD DISCUSS PROJECT WITH DR. KASSAB TO DETERMINE
ARRANGEMENTS NEEDED FOR HIS CONTINUED PARTICIPATION IN
PROJECT; 3) CHATER WILL SEND DHEW/RSA VIA EMBASSY A PROPOSAL
APPROVED BY MIN SOCIAL AFFAIRS TO REACTIVATE PROJECT.

4. EMBASSY WILL STUDY FINANCIAL REPORTS AND MAKE TELEGRAPHIC
RECOMMENDATION TO DHEW ON NECESSITY FOR AUDIT.

5. COMMENT: KASSAB SEEMS GENUINELY INTERESTED IN PROJECT BUT
HAS SUFFERED FROM LACK OF COOPERATION FROM CUMBERSOME, AND
SEEMINGLY CONTRARY, BUREAUCRACY. CHATER ALSO EXTREMELY
COOPERATIVE, EXPLAINING THAT SHE WAS AWAY FROM MIN SOCIAL
AFFAIRS FOR TWO YEARS DURING WHICH TIME PROJECT HALTED.
EMBASSY AND READ AGREE THAT KEY TO PROJECT IS DR. KASSAB,
AND THAT UNLESS HE STAYS WITH PROJECT IT SHOULD BE
TERMINATED. APPROPRIATE GOT OFFICIALS ARE NOW RPT NOW
AWARE OF USG/DHEW CONCERN OVER STATUS THIS PROJECT. GROUND-
WORK HAS BEEN LAID TO TERMINATE SHOULD THAT BE NECESSARY.
MULCAHY

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